

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 CIAE-00 CU-04 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 USIA-15

AF-10 ARA-10 EA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01

OMB-01 TRSE-00 ABF-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 L-02 OIC-02

HEW-06 OES-05 /132 W

----- 116299

R 191934Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5312

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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NESCO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PORG, SOPN, ISRAEL, UNESCO

SUBJECT: PRESS INTERVIEW WITH ISRAELI JOURNALIST AND
UNESCO DG M'BOW

REF: PARIS 30574

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF INTERVIEW:

"REPLIES BY MR. AMADOU-MAHTAR M'BOW, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF
UNESCO, TO QUESTIONS PUT TO HIM BY MADAME TAMAR FINE-
GOLAN, CORRESPONDENT OF ISRAELI NEWSPAPER MAARIV.

MRS. FINE-GOLAN:

THE RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING ISRAEL, ADOPTED AT THE EIGHT-
EENTH GENERAL CONFERENCE OF UNESCO LAST MONTH IN PARIS,
HAVE PROVOKED MUCH EMOTION AND CRITICISM AMONG SOME OF
THE MEMBER-STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION, AND IN PARTICULAR-
IN ISRAEL. THIS IS WHY MY QUESTIONS WILL HAVE TO CENTRE
MOSTLY ON THESE RESOLUTIONS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS.

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MR. M'BOW:

FIRST OF ALL, I SHOULD POINT OUT THAT WHILE THE RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING ISRAEL HAVE ATTRACTED MOST ATTENTION IN THE MEDIA IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES, THESE WERE ONLY PART OF THE DECISIONS OF A MEETING OF 135 SOVEREIGN STATES WHICH ARE MEMBERS OF UNESCO. THEIR NEARLY SIX-WEEK CONFERENCE IN FACT TOOK SOMETHING LIKE 500 VOTES ON A WIDE VARIETY OF TOPICS. IT DECIDED ON A TWO-YEAR PROGRAMME AND A \$170 MILLION BUDGET COVERING PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION WHICH PRODUCED CONSENSUS FROM THE WHOLE RANGE OF UNESCO MEMBER STATES, WITH ALL THEIR VARIED IDEOLOGIES, RELIGIONS, ETHNIC GROUPINGS, SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND HISTORICAL OUTLOOKS. UNESCO HAS BEEN GIVEN A TASK BY THE WORLD COMMUNITY AND WILL DO ITS BEST TO CARRY IT OUT.

MRS. FINE-GOLAN:

DO YOU CONSIDER THAT THE ORGANIZATION IS NOW FACING PROBLEMS OF FINANCING AND OF REGAINING CREDIBILITY? IF SO, HOW DO YOU INTEND TO SURMOUNT THESE DIFFICULTIES?

MR. M'BOW:

FINANCE AND CREDIBILITY ARE OBVIOUSLY FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS FOR AN ORGANIZATION SUCH AS UNESCO, WHICH EXISTS TO SERVE THE WORLD COMMUNITY AND WHICH CAN OPERATE EFFECTIVELY ONLY AS LONG AS ITS MEMBER STATES LOYALLY SUPPORT IT, BOTH THROUGH THE FUNDS THEY SUPPLY AND THE RESPECT THEY PAY TO THE IDEALS IT REPRESENTS AND THE DECISIONS IT TAKES.

FOR ALL THE AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM, NOT ONLY UNESCO, FINANCING IS A CONTINUING PRE-OCCUPATION AND PARTICULARLY IN A TIME OF INFLATION AND DEVALUATION SUCH AS THE PRESENT. UNESCO DEPENDS UPON THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ITS MEMBER STATES AND SUPPORT FROM EXTRA-BUDGETARY SOURCES SUCH AS THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME. OBVIOUSLY, THIS FLOW IS INFLUENCED BY MANY FACTORS WHICH ARE BEYOND THE CONTROL OF UNESCO AND ITS DIRECTOR-GENERAL.

WHEN I TOOK OFFICE, I MYSELF WARNED THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE ORGANIZATION. BUT THE PRESENT SITUATION IS NO DIFFERENT IN KIND FROM

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MANY SITUATIONS IN THE PAST WHICH UNESCO HAS SURMOUNTED BECAUSE ITS 135 MEMBER STATES DO BELIEVE IN THE GREAT AIMS SET OUT IN ITS CONSTITUTION AND BECAUSE OF THE PROVEN VALUE OF ITS WORK IN THE FIELDS OF ITS COMPETENCE. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THIS WILL CONTINUE TO BE TRUE.

AS REGARDS THE CREDIBILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION, I REGRET THAT THE RECENT DECISIONS OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE HAVE BEEN WIDELY MISREPORTED AND MISINTERPRETED.

THESE INACCURACIES, AS PEOPLE IN ISRAEL MUST BE AWARE,
ARE ESSENTIALLY TO THE EFFECT THAT "ISRAEL HAS BEEN EX-
CLUDED FROM UNESCO" ALTHOUGH THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
TOOK NO SUCH DECISION; WHAT HAS HAPPENED IS THAT ISRAEL'S
REPRESENTATIVE PROPOSED TO THE CONFERENCE THAT HIS COUN-
TRY SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EUROPEAN GROUPING OF MEM-

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HEW-06 OES-05 /132 W

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BER STATES AND THAT THIS PROPOSAL WAS REJECTED.

TODAY, TWO MEMBER STATES, ISRAEL AND SAN MARINO
(THE NEWEST MEMBER OF UN/ESCO), ARE NOT LISTED AS BELONG-
ING TO A REGIONAL GROUP. BUT THAT WAS THE SITUATION OF
16 MEMBER STATES, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA, CANADA, AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, BETWEEN 1964
-- WHEN THESE AD HOC GROUPS WERE FIRST ESTABLISHED --
AND THE RECENT GENERAL CONFERENCE. NOBODY THEN CLAIMED
THAT COUNTRIES HAD BEEN "EXCLUDED" AND THE CLAIM SHOULD
NOT BE MADE TODAY. ISRAEL CONTINUES TO BE A FULL

MEMBER OF UNESCO WITH THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN ITS

WORLDWIDE ACTIVITIES AND TO SEND OBSERVERS TO ALL ITS REGIONAL MEETINGS, AS IT HAS DONE IN THE PAST - FOR EXAMPLE IN THE CASE OF THE BUCHAREST CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION IN 1973.

IT IS TRUE THAT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE HAS INVITED ME TO "WITHHOLD ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELDS OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS ISRAEL SCRUPULOUSLY RESPECTS THE DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS" TAKEN BY THE UNCLASSIFIED

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ORGANIZATION REGARDING JERUSALEM AND THE PRESERVATION OF ITS CULTURAL HERITAGE, A CONSTITUTIONAL OBLIGATION OF UNESCO, WHICH IS CAMPAIGNING TO SAVE OTHER OUTSTANDING SITES, INCLUDING MOENJODARO, BOROBUDUR AND VENICE. LET US BE QUITE CLEAR WHAT THESE INSTRUCTIONS MEAN. THE GENERAL CONFERENCE TOOK INTO ACCOUNT ALL THE RESOLUTIONS WHICH IT AND THE EXECUTIVE BOARD HAD PASSED SINCE 1968 AND WHICH CALLED ON ISRAEL TO "DESIST FROM ANY ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS . . . AND FROM ANY MODIFICATIONS OF ITS FEATURES" AND WHICH IT CONSIDERED HAD NOT BEEN HEEDDED BY ISRAEL. THERE IS NO ROOM FOR DOUBT THAT THE NATIONS WHICH VOTED FOR THIS RESOLUTION HAD IN MIND IMPOSING SANCTIONS ON ISRAEL FOR WHAT THEY CONSIDERED CONTINUED FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH A SERIES OF RESOLUTIONS DATING BACK TO 1968.

THERE ARE TWO POINTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE RESOLUTION ON JERUSALEM WHICH I WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY; THEY CONCERN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RESOLUTION AS EXPLAINED TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE. FIRSTLY, IT IS MY VIEW THAT BY REAFFIRMING ITS PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS AND IN PARTICULAR RESOLUTION 3.422 OF THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION (1972),

THE CONFERENCE HAS INVITED ME TO CONTINUE MY EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH AN EFFECTIVE PRESENCE OF UNESCO IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM - AND THIS I CONSIDER I SHOULD DO. SECONDLY, AS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL INFORMED THE COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF MY PREDECESSOR BEFORE MY ELECTION, THE "ASSISTANCE" TO BE WITHHELD UNDER THE TERMS OF THE RESOLUTION REFERS TO AID GIVEN UNDER THE PROGRAMME OF PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTIVITIES OF MEMBER STATES, WHICH FORMS PART OF THE ORGANIZATION'S REGULAR PROGRAMME, AND TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF PROJECTS UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AND OTHER EXTRA-BUDGETARY RESOURCES.

MRS. FINE-GOLAN:

SINCE YOUR ELECTION TO YOUR NEW POST, YOU HAVE ALREADY VISITED ROME AND BELGRADE. SOME REPORTS ALSO SPEAK OF A FORTHCOMING VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA. WOULD YOU ALSO

CONTEMPLATE A VISIT TO ISRAEL, IN ORDER TO STUDY PER-
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SONALLY THE SITUATION THERE AND TO BE ABLE TO DISCUSS
THE EXISTING PROBLEMS WITH THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT?
MR. M'BOW:

YES, I AM QUITE PREPARED, IF INVITED, TO VISIT ISRAEL
AT A CONVENIENT TIME, AND I AM ALWAYS READY TO DISCUSS
PROBLEMS OF COMMON CONCERN WITH THE GOVERNMENTS OF ALL
MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION.

MRS. FINE-GOLAN:

HAS UNESCO BEEN APPROACHED OFFICIALLY BY ANY ARAB STATE
WITH REGARDS TO COMPENSATING UNESCO FOR POSSIBLE BUDGET
CUTS RESULTING FROM THE SUPPRESSION OF CONTRIBUTIONS BY
SOME MEMBER-STATES, NOTABLY THE U.S.A.? STATEMENTS TO
THIS EFFECT (CITING THE SUM OF US\$16 MILLION) WERE MADE
IN SOME ARAB CAPITALS AND CARRIED BY THE PRESS.

MR. M'BOW:

THE QUESTION OF BUDGET CUTS HAS NOT ARISEN AND I AM NOW
PREPARING TO CARRY OUT THE PROGRAMME FOR 1975-1976 IN
THE FORM IN WHICH IT HAS JUST BEEN ADOPTED BY THE 18TH

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OMB-01 TRSE-00 ABF-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSC-05 L-02 OIC-02

HEW-06 OES-05 /132 W

----- 116384

R 191934Z DEC 74
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SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

MRS. FINE-GOLAN:

DOES UNESCO'S SECRETARIAT INTEND TO TAKE ANY CONCRETE
STEPS TO SOLVE THE SITUATION EXISTING TODAY WHERE
ISRAEL IS THE ONLY MEMBER-STATE OF THE ORGANIZATION NOT
TO BELONG TO ANY REGIONAL OFFICE?

MR. M'BOW:

LET US BE QUITE CLEAR ABOUT THE SECRETARIAT. THIS IS A
BODY OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVANTS, HEADED BY ME, FROM
MORE THAN 100 MEMBER STATES, INCLUDING ISRAEL. THEY
ARE ANSWERABLE TO ME, AS I AM ANSWERABLE TO THE GENERAL
CONFERENCE. THE SECRETARIAT EXISTS TO CARRY OUT THE
DECISIONS CONCERNING ISRAEL. AS REGARDS THE SITUATION
OF ISRAEL AS A MEMBER STATE NOT YET LISTED FOR FULL PAR-
TICIPATION IN REGIONAL ACTIVITIES, THIS IS A MATTER
WHICH ONLY THE GENERAL CONFERENCE CAN DECIDE; THE
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SECRETARIAT HAS NO COMPETENCE IN THIS RESPECT. BUT THE
PRESENT SITUATION, SO LONG AS IT LASTS, SHOULD NOT BE
EXAGGERATED: ISRAEL, LIKE ALL OTHER MEMBER STATES, IS
ENTITLED TO ATTEND ALL REGIONAL MEETINGS AS AN OBSERVER
AND THIS RIGHT HAS NOT BEEN CHANGED.

MRS. FINE-GOLAN:

FINALLY, MR. DIRECTOR-GENERAL, IF YOU FEEL THAT THE
QUESTIONS INCLUDED HERE DO NOT COVER THE MAIN ISSUES,
AND IF YOU WISH TO DELIVER A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE
ISRAELI PUBLIC, THIS NEWSPAPER WILL BE ONLY HAPPY TO
CARRY ANY STATEMENT BY YOU.

MR. M'BOW:

MY MESSAGE TO THE ISRAELI PEOPLE IS THIS: DURING THE 28 YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE UNESCO HAS DONE MUCH TO ENCOURAGE AND ORGANIZE INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD TO THE BENEFIT OF ALL MANKIND. IN THIS TASK THE CONTRIBUTION OF ISRAELI CITIZENS - SCIENTISTS, EDUCATORS, MEN OF LETTERS, ARTISTS AND THE LIKE - HAS BEEN AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ONE. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE ORGANIZATION CAN CONTINUE TO COUNT UPON THEIR SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION IN THE FUTURE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, JOURNALISTS, PRESS CONFERENCES, DIRECTOR GENERAL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PARIS30575
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740369-1037
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741222/aaaaasro.tel
Line Count: 343
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 74 PARIS 30574
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 OCT 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 OCT 2002 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <07 JAN 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS INTERVIEW WITH ISRAELI JOURNALIST AND UNESCO DG M'BOW
TAGS: PORG, SOPN, IS, UNESCO, (M'BOW, AMADOU MAHTAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005